

Norfolk District Attorney's
Office

(781) 830-4800

Department of Social
Services

(800) KIDS-508

Child-At-Risk Hotline

(800) 792-5200

For TTY/TDD users, call
Massachusetts Relay Service (24
hours a day)

TTY/TDD: (800) 439-2370

VOICE: (800) 439-0183

The Sexual Abuse Intervention
Network of the Norfolk District is a
partnership program between the
Office of Norfolk District Attorney

William R. Keating and the
Massachusetts Department of
Social Services.



William R. Keating

Norfolk District Attorney
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

45 Shawmut Road
Canton, MA 02021

(781) 830-4800

www.norfolkda.com



Sexual Abuse Intervention Network (S.A.I.N.)

Frequently asked questions about child abuse investigation



A Message from the District Attorney

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We understand that this is likely to be a difficult and confusing time for you and your child. The Sexual Abuse Intervention Network (SAIN) for Norfolk County has been developed as a joint effort between the District Attorney's Office (DA's Office) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) to coordinate services for you and your family. The primary goal of the SAIN Team (the "Team") is to reduce the number of times your child will have to be interviewed by different professionals. The Team is also designed to quickly respond to your needs and the needs of your child as well as to allow you the earliest opportunity to obtain information about the various agencies working with your family.

In order to ensure the safety and protection of your child(ren), the law requires that reports of possible child abuse must be investigated. In the routine procedure, several individuals or agencies are likely to conduct separate investigations and interviews of a child over several weeks. The Team coordinates these professionals from the different agencies to conduct this investigation.

The enclosed questions about the Team have been asked frequently by parents whose children have been involved in similar investigations. We hope that this information will help to answer your concerns or questions.

William R. Keating

Some Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the SAIN Team Members?

SAIN Team Members (The “Team”) include representative staff members from the District Attorney’s Office, the Department of Social Services and State and/or Local Police Departments. These representatives include specialized investigators, Victim/Witness Advocates, Social Workers and Assistant District Attorneys.

What should I tell my child about this meeting?

Children are most comfortable when they know what to expect. Therefore, we suggest the following:

- Explain to your child that (s)he will be meeting with a concerned adult to talk about what happened to him/her.
- Tell your child that the person that will be talking with him/her talks to lots of children and it is that person’s job to make sure kids are safe.
- Do not tell your child what to say; please...simply tell your child to tell the truth.
- Please reassure your child that s/he is not in trouble and is not going to this meeting because s/he has done something wrong.
- The interviewer will spend time with your child explaining the need for the meeting and the interview process.

How does the interview work?

- Only one member of the Team will interview your child.
- Other Team members observe through a two-way mirror.
- The Team is able to communicate with the interviewer to ensure all necessary information is obtained.

What is the advantage of having my child interviewed by the Team?

- Having Team members observe the one-on-one interview limits the number of times your child must recount what happened to him/her.
- Services for your family will be better coordinated.
- You will have an opportunity to meet the professionals and ask any questions that you may have.
- If you choose not to participate in the SAIN process, the DSS Investigator will interview your child; the DA’s Office may then conduct their own investigation in conjunction with the police at a later time.



Will this be the only time my child will have to speak about the abuse?

- It is important to understand that participation in this program does not mean your child will never have to speak about the abuse again.
- Children may continue to speak about their experience as they work through their feelings.

Can I sit with my child during the interview?

- Parents are not permitted to sit with the child during the interview.
- It is important for the interviewer to talk with your child alone.
- Since it is often difficult for children to talk about these issues, a parent’s presence may inhibit or distract the child during the interview.
- Children may also look to a parent to provide answers to questions posed during the interview.
- It is best if your child is able to provide the information him or herself in the most conducive way possible.

Can I sit with the Team during the interview?

- Parents are not permitted to sit with the Team during the interview.
- Because this is an investigation, the Team members need to carefully observe, assess and document the interview. They would be unavailable to respond to your immediate concerns.
- We encourage you to bring a family member or friend to wait with you in our family waiting room while your child is interviewed and to sit with your child while you are meeting with the team.

What will happen after this interview?

- The professionals on the Team will meet briefly to discuss the information disclosed during the interview.
- You will then meet with the Team to discuss information about your child’s interview and hear the Team’s recommendations.
- The Victim Witness Advocate will consult with you and discuss your child’s involvement in the court process.
- Your child’s case will be conferred by the Team on a regular basis to ensure that you and your child receive all necessary services.